

**Archaeological Data Base Enhancement for Mississippian Sites  
in Southwestern Indiana**

Prepared for

Indiana Department of Natural Resources,  
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## Abstract

An archaeological database enhancement project for Mississippian sites in southwestern Indiana was conducted by the Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University, in August and September 1987. The project was supported by funds granted by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology. Five counties comprised the target area for the project: Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Spencer. The goal of the project was to collect new information about sites of two defined Mississippian phases, the Angel phase (AD 1050 - 1450) and the Caborn-Welborn phase (AD 1400-1700) and about Mississippian sites that may not be classifiable at present to either phase.

The goal of the project was to gain new information for 50 to 100 Mississippian sites. This goal was significantly exceeded in the target area. Field survey was not a component of the project, but brief inspections were made at two Mississippian sites to check their condition; 5 acres were covered. Similarly, no field survey collections were made during the project; however, the Laboratory received from amateur archaeologists the donation of surface collections made at two sites and the loan of artifactual material from two other sites for identification.

In the course of this project, an appraisal was gained of the status of the Mississippian site database for future endeavors that involve either research or historic preservation planning. Some site records are not on file at the Laboratory and thus cannot be integrated with information at hand, incongruencies were identified in site numbers and characteristics on site record forms, and few private collections are documented by actual tabulations or photographs of artifacts. Recommendations are offered for future projects that would enhance the database for researching and conserving sites of the Mississippian period.

An appraisal was also made of which particular sites should be further investigated in the immediate future, because of their importance to understanding the chronology and settlement systems of the Angel and Caborn-Welborn phases. Two key factors affected this appraisal: conditions have changed greatly at certain Mississippian sites that are either eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places, due to looting, oil drilling, and construction; and erosion, looting, or urban development threaten the integrity of other sites that probably would meet the criteria of the National Register, if sufficient documentation were available.

*Abstract created by Patrick Sovereign  
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